

# Commission Notes



A publication of the Indiana Arts Commission

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## Indiana quarter takes green flag at Speedway's yard of brick

Governor Frank O'Bannon, joined by federal, state and local officials, unveiled Indiana's commemorative quarter during an Aug. 8 ceremony at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.



Artist concept of Indiana quarter (U.S. Mint image)

The coin design, based on a concept submitted to the Indiana Arts Commis-

sion by Josh Harvey of Centerville, features an Indy car against the outline of the state, a circle of 19 stars, and the state's motto, "Crossroads of America."

"There isn't a better location to make this coin available to the world than at the Speedway," O'Bannon said.

The ceremony included a pace car escort of the new coin around the 2.5 mile track. Coins were also available for sale to the public at the Speedway ceremony, at the Indiana State Fair, and at 13 of Indiana's State Parks and recreation facilities.

The IAC coordinated the call for quarter design concepts and convened a panel of judges that included coin collectors, historians, artists, teachers, museum curators, and representatives from the Governor's office, Indiana General Assembly, State Historical Bureau, State Museum, Department of Natural Resources, Secretary of State's office, and Treasurer's office.

Commission Chair Will Clark, Commissioner Jack Schriber and former Commissioner Claude Johnson attended the ceremony.

## Sculptor George Rickey was former GAA recipient

Former Indiana native George Rickey died July 17 at his St. Paul, Minn. home at the age of 95.

Best known for his abstract kinetic sculptures, Rickey was born in South Bend, Ind. and at age six moved with his family to Scotland.

Rickey studied painting and drawing at Oxford before pursuing a serious study of art in Paris.

Upon returning to the United States, Rickey briefly taught history before devoting full time efforts toward painting.

After serving in Army during World War II, Rickey made his first sculpture while working as an associated professor at Indiana University.

Rickey was a 1975 recipient of the Indiana Governor's Arts Award.

### Former Commissioner Stuart Place dies

DALLAS - As the June issue of Commission Notes was distributed, the IAC learned that former IAC Commissioner Stuart Place passed away February 28, 2001.

Place, formerly of South Bend, served on the Commission from 1984 to 1988.

He is survived by his wife Bette.

### Departures:

- The IAC regrets to announce that Gayle Holtman resigned from the agency effective August 8. Gayle accepted a position with VSA arts of Indiana where she will be serving as director of districts and residencies. Gayle originally joined the IAC in 1990. From 1997 to 2000 she worked with the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, but rejoined the IAC staff in October of 2000 as community development manager. The IAC staff and Commissioners wish Gayle the very best in this new opportunity to serve the arts in Indiana.

## House supports increase in funding for NEA

The House of Representatives voted earlier this month to increase proposed funding to the National Endowment for the Arts by \$10 million.

By a vote of 234 to 192 recommended the \$116 million NEA budget proposed by the Bush Administration be increased to \$126 million - roughly 10 percent more than budgeted for the agency in 2002.

The additional funding for the NEA was part of a bipartisan amendment offered by the leadership of the Congressional Arts Caucus.

The \$10 million in new funding approved by the House would go to the NEA's Challenge America program

The Senate has not yet voted on its version of the Interior Appropriations Bill.

# "Covenant" photos capture life of inner-city church

Tyagan Miller never took family photos, much less considered a career as a photographer. In the early 90's, he was teaching at an alternative school in Indianapolis when, at age 40, he first became interested in photography as a possible creative outlet for troubled students facing expulsion. But his teaching gave him more than a new found passion for the art of photography.

"I noticed that most of the kids who seemed to have the best chance of not falling through the cracks of the system seemed to have strong links to church and family," Miller said. "I wanted to explore that more deeply and document it through photography."

In 1996 Miller would get his chance. The Polis Center at IUPUI and Lilly Endowment sponsored The Religion and Urban Culture Project. Over the course of a year, a group of Hoosier photographers and writers set about documenting aspects of spirituality and community in Indianapolis. Tyagan Miller was one of them.

A co-worker suggested Miller visit her church (Friendship Missionary Baptist Church) and after a meeting with the pastor and deacons, Miller set about his work.

"In the beginning I wanted to focus on the men and boys in the church because it seemed most of my students were black males," Miller explained, "but I changed my focus to explore the whole



*Tyagan Miller photo provided by Indianapolis Museum of Art*

life and community within the church."

Although the project concluded in 1998 with an exhibition of photographs at the Indianapolis Museum of Art (IMA), and the publication of the book *Falling Toward Grace*, Miller continued to focus his lens on life within the church. Four and a half years and 4,000 negatives later a sample of the results of his in depth study can be seen in the exhibition "Covenant" through November 10 at the IMA. Miller is also exploring the possibilities of developing a book inspired by this project. But the real results for Miller are much more personal.

Lee Marks, IAC Commissioner from Shelbyville and owner of Lee Marks Fine Art, helped Miller assemble the collection of 65 images for the exhibition.

"He really became involved in the life of this church," said Marks, who was so impressed by Miller's work, she has since taken on the role of Miller's agent.

A recent recipient of an IAC Individual Artist Project grant, Miller's next project is portraying the Latin-American community of Monroe County. Images from this project will be exhibited in the Mathers Museum at Indiana University. A curriculum plan will also be developed for use by the Monroe County School Corporation.

## Local tax support for the arts rejected

Early this month, the Tippecanoe County Commissioners rejected a proposal that would have earmarked \$240,000 a year in economic development income tax revenue for 10 county arts and cultural organizations.

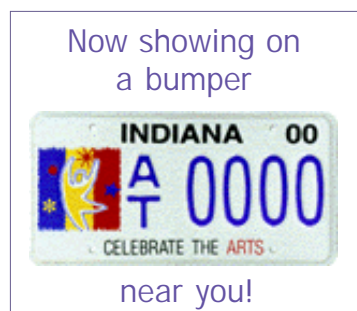
Jim Bodenmiller, a member of the Greater Lafayette Chamber of Commerce Cultural Task Force, and Vice-chair of the Indiana Arts Commission, presented the plan to commissioners from the perspective that not only would the funding help the county's arts organizations but would also improve economic development.

Economic Development Tax (EDIT) funds may only be used for "capitol improvement" projects, and this appeared to be where the two sides disagreed on the plan.

The organizations listed in the original proposal proposed using the funds for various facility needs such as a new dance floor, a band

shell, and window air conditioners. Commissioners voted 2-1 to reject the proposal with the majority members stating they did not believe the EDIT funds could be used in this way. Rep. Sheila Klinker (D-Lafayette) spoke to commissioners in support of the plan.

"When SIA (Subaru-Isuzu) was looking to relocate to Lafayette, the Japanese asked, 'Do you have a symphony? do you have an opera? Do you have an art museum, a singing group and music programs for children?' We were able to say yes to all of those. The arts are an integral part of our community, and for long-term assistance we need to look for some public assistance to help the arts."



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